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Tuesday, June 17, 1975

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Old Chicago

How did it happen—Old Chicago's story

★★★ The year of 1973 ★★★

In June of 1973, Robert Brindle brings a watercolor print of his proposed Old Chicago Towne to the Bolingbrook plan commission.

He proposes a 345,000 square foot complex that will include outdoor-type amusement rides ringed by stores. He promises to "put Bolingbrook on the map."

"We don't expect any of the big merchandising giants here," says Brindle. Shops are to be of the specialty variety.

Brindle was negotiating during that spring with the village.

Bolingbrook and Romeoville vied

★★★

The year of 1974

January

• Brindle brings the first of his building plans to the plan commission. But the building's foundation — without approval of the village — had already been laid in the fall of 1973.

• The first of many legal troubles start as Brindle is told that his foundation exceeds setback

for the development and tax money it would bring. Old Chicago would be south of I-55 and thought to be rightfully Romeoville's, according to the prevailing philosophy in the southern village at that time.

Purchase of an additional 200 acres to accommodate a hotel and golf course fell through.

January, 1976

• There's a shake-up of Old Chicago management amid rumors of bankruptcy, just six months after the grand opening.

Brindle is on his way out. New management includes IC Industries.

May, 1976

• Clyde Farnan becomes the new

★★★ The year of 1976 ★★★

general manager. There's a note of optimism in the air.

Annual payroll for the park is in excess of \$3.5 million.

The amusement tax is bringing the village some \$200,000 to \$300,000 each year, plus \$120,000 in sales taxes. In addition, Bolingbrook gets positive PR with its name in every Old Chicago ad.

June, 1976

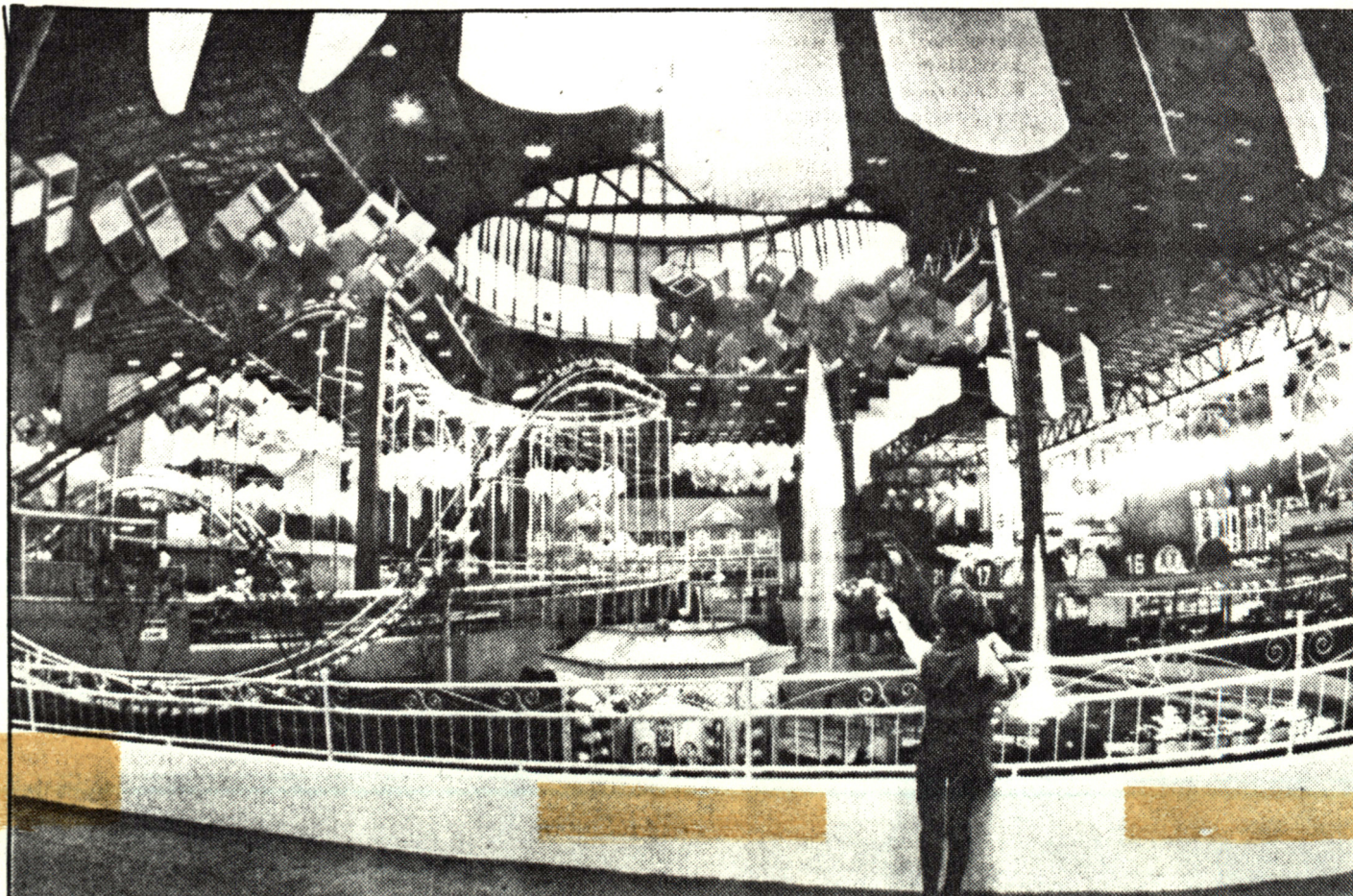
• The story behind the Old Chicago bankruptcy is detailed, including \$8 million in construction cost overruns.

Nevertheless, the general manager refers to the bankruptcy as "only a technical readjustment," and announces new attractions that will put Old Chicago on the right track...

• Meanwhile, he is casting a watchful eye to the north, in Gurnee, where the Marriott Corporation is just opening its new "amusement extravaganza."

December, 1976

• Fayva Shoes opens on the mall, but Columbian House restaurant



many legal start as Brindle is told that his foundation exceeds setback requirements in the village codes.

The village refuses to issue building permits. Brindle begs for zoning and approval of plans, saying that he can't get any money from his financial backers without approval.

A new set of hearings is called.

Brindle claims he's used to building in

Southern California where they get approval as construction continues.

May

- The 15-foot-wide, 40-ton wall section are lifted into place by cranes — but still without approval of the village.

★★★ The year of 1975 ★★★

June 5, 1975

- Dome dancer Michelle Mauthe, a Bolingbrook resident, dances in the drizzle for television cameras in a commercial.

June 6, 1975

- The Lions arrive to take up their guardian positions at the grand entrance of Old Chicago.

June 17, 1975

- Ten to sixteen thousand invited guests create mammoth traffic jams to attend a pre-opening party for Old Chicago. It takes half an hour to go from Boughton Road down Rt. 53 to the park.

- With threats from the village and mayor Nora Wipfler, Old Chicago management is told it may not open on June 21. It's still too dangerous, with exposed wiring and half-completed storefronts.

- Village officials find themselves in a no-win position: either allow "civilians to enter the building still under construction" or turn away thousands of guests that fill the parking lot and Rt. 53.

June 26, 1975

- An estimated 15,000 attend the two-day opening ceremonies following a last minute inspection by village officials. Construction crews work around the clock to pass inspection.

July 3, 1975

- Village shuts down Old Chicago for six hours because of sprinkler malfunction. There are heated discussions between the village and Brindle.

September, 1975

- Brindle says that each weekend brings an average of 50,000 visitors to Old Chicago. Traffic snarls Rt. 53 all the way to Lisle.

- Attractions include such rides as the Chicago Loop, Rotor, Yo-Yo Flume,

Chicago Cat, Windy City Flyer, plus the International Circus and Vaudeville Theatre.

- Two restaurants serve Old Chicago: Columbia House owned by Frank Zaucha, owner of the New Lemont Truck Stop; and the Old Chicago Biergarten.

October, 1975

- Village and Old Chicago management are at odds again over what the village says is renegeing on the fire safety pact. Some 500 people are evacuated after a fire in the trash compactor. Park management complains that the fire department was overreacting to a relatively small fire.

- Miss Teenage Chicago crowned at Old Chicago.

November, 1975

- Old Chicago post office opens, replacing the Osco substation. The new post office carries its own distinctive postmark.

- The "Comedy King of the Air," 56-year-old Jimmy Troy, falls 20 feet to his death from the trapeze in an aerial accident of the Old Chicago circus.



★★★ The year of 1977 ★★★

February, 1977

- Village manager Reed Carlson announces that Robert Brindle, who conceived and built Old Chicago, is "completely out of the picture now."

Control of the giant complex now rests completely with IC Industries. That conglomerate's representatives meet with retail merchants at Old Chicago and unveil plans for a major revamp of the amusement park area.

April, 1977

- Old Chicago donates space to the Fountaindale Theatre Project, the local amateur theatre group, to perform its plays.

Summer, 1977

- Operating hours are shifted. Features are added to attract more people, including psychic fairs, battle of the drums competition, graduation nights, family nights, antique shows, car and cycle shows, The Acapulco High Diving Team, and "The Human Torch," who literally sets himself on fire.

July, 1977

- The Bolingbrook Jaycees stage their third annual fireworks display at Old Chicago, accompanied by parachuters and midget racers.

- Billed under the headline of "public executions at Old Chicago," a desperate public relations gimmick promotes celebration of Bastille Day at the park, with fun shows featuring "the rack, cat-o-nine-tails and other antique torture devices."

August, 1977

A new position is created, that of "mall manager." He is Joseph Vilsack, not to be confused with the new general manager, Cleveland Smith, of Wynne Enterprises, called in to revitalize and rehab, not to mention put more amusement into the amusement park. The mall manager's mission: fill up the shop-fronts.

- Hollywood movie director Brian DePalma becomes the first person to try to demolish Old Chicago. While shooting a scene for his film, "The Fury," DePalma and his special effects crews

send part of one ride crashing through the window of the Biergarten.

Extras in the movie include several Bolingbrook residents who may be seen if you look quickly at the two-minute sequence that immortalizes Old Chicago on film.

September, 1977

- DeeJays John Landecker, Steve King and Bob Sirott host part of the Jerry Lewis Muscular Dystrophy telethon at Old Chicago. Some \$27,000 is allegedly raised at the park alone.

October, 1977

- Old Chicago hosts the Pepsi Challenge, one of the first locations in the Chicago area.

November, 1977

- The Fun Factory, a multi-level superplay area for younger children, with its own separate admission fee and entrance, opens as part of a \$6 million improvement program.

Also included in the improvements are colorful sound baffles hung under the dome to help prevent the deafening unpleasant noise of outdoor amusement rides operating indoors.

New rides include the Screamer and Barnstormer airplane thrill ride plus a laser light show.



Annerino: Chinese want to purchase Old Chicago

by Jolene Kremer

Chinese government officials have made an offer to buy the Old Chicago building in Bolingbrook, but the deal probably will not be finalized, Will County Board Chairman John Annerino said last week.

Annerino returned late Wednesday, Dec. 18, from a trip to Liaoning city in China, with a "letter of intent" in hand. He said Chinese officials would like to purchase the former amusement and shopping center and transform it into an International Trade and Exposition Center.

The deal does not look good, he said, because of the timing involved. He said plans to demolish the building, owned by IC Industries of Chicago, are too far along.

"I don't want to get the hopes up of the people of Bolingbrook again. I'm sure I can deliver that project, but the timing's just not right," Annerino said. "If I had another 60 days, I think I could bring that project through for Bolingbrook. I'm not in control, though. I don't own the property and I'm not the village government."

"The deal probably won't work given the particulars," he said, explaining that IC Industries wants to tear it down and Bolingbrook village officials are encouraging those efforts. "It doesn't look very bright for Bolingbrook."

Harry Grove, director of civic affairs for IC Industries, said that his company had not heard of or seen the offer from the Chinese.

"We will certainly proceed, if the village concurs, and take a look at this offer," he said, adding that his company has not yet made formal application to the village for a demolition permit.

"Demolition is a possible option, but it is not scheduled as yet," Grove said. "There's no definite date for the start of demolition."

Grove said he would want the village government's approval before his company would take the offer.

"Throughout the process, the village has been involved in helping to find a suitable alternate use for the building. The village would have to be involved in the zoning," he said. "We would not proceed if it wasn't in the best interests of both us and the village."

Grove said he did not want to comment on what an "attractive" offer would be for the property and building. "I just can't answer that," he said.

Bolingbrook Village Presi-

dent Robert Bailey said he will look at the offer.

"The deal would have to be analyzed to determine its credibility and merits. A lot of times, people in foreign countries make commitments and then we never see the cash. Old Chicago has been sold a million and two times, but we're not going to close any door," Bailey said.

Even if the Bolingbrook deal falls through, Annerino said the Chinese have committed to building the trade center somewhere else in Will County.

"They said they would be willing to construct a new building. That would cost between \$10,000,000 and \$15,000,000," Annerino said.

Grove did say that an offer from the Chinese for Old Chicago in that price range would "certainly strike us as a serious offer."

Annerino said the trade center, wherever it is located, would be a "window to China" and allow American businessmen to deal with importing or exporting Chinese goods without traveling to the country.

He said the countries of Malaysia and Taiwan already have similar trade centers in the United States.

"This is China's first move to that type of marketing system. I guess the first one will be in Will County. We'll just have to put it together," he said.

He said the plans for the trade center could be combined with the plans in Will County of hosting the 1992 World's Fair.

"Cook County doesn't seem to have its act together; DuPage County doesn't want it. We could bring it to Will County," he said, adding that representatives from the Hyatt Hotel chain are looking into the World's Fair possibility.

This Week's Pharmacy Topics

by John Singletary

Super gimmick reminds you to take your pill on time — electronic cap for pill vial lights up and beeps until you open the container.

You can increase the effectiveness of an insulin dose by massaging the injection site for 3 minutes. Pennsylvania doctor says this reduces the drug pool usually left at the injection site.

Autistic children seem to be helped by the tranquilizer drug haloperidol. Clinical test at New York University medical center showed that the drug significantly reduced hyperactivity and disruptive behavior.

Now that the radiation used for mammography has been reduced substantially, the American Cancer Society recommends that all women over 40 have a yearly mammogram.

Women who breast feed may not be getting enough vitamin B6 in their diet, the Journal of the American Dietetic Association reports. For their sake and the baby's, supplements are recommended.

The world's first medical book was an old Egyptian papyrus. It mentions varicose veins!

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Joliet woman charged with forgery, battery

Bolingbrook police arrested a 35-year-old Joliet resident, Dorothy Jefferson, on Dec. 21.

She was charged with forgery, aggravated battery, and resisting arrest, after she allegedly attempted to cash a forged check at the Central Federal Savings and Loan.

Ms. Jefferson also struck a police officer during the incident, the police report claims.

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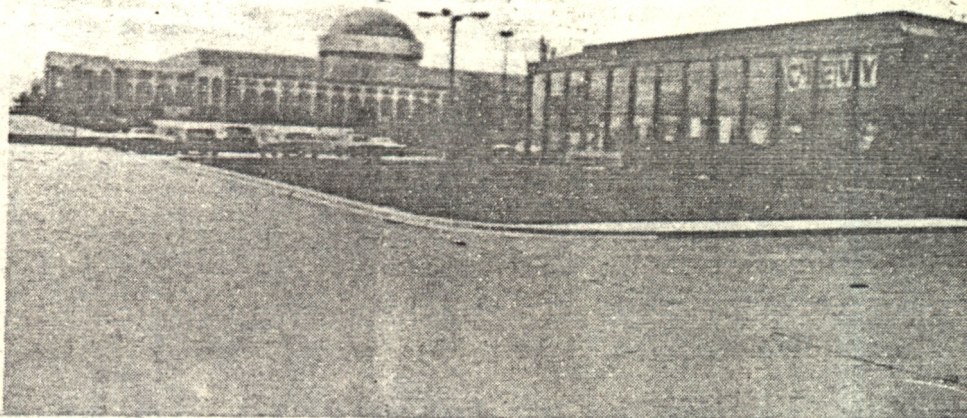
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The Sun Wed Dec. 25, 1985

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Ed James Chevrolet sits beside the dome and the parcel where a new auto dealership will come if the lawyers and money men can make the C.L. Carr purchase of Old Chicago go through. It didn't quite happen Monday the way it was hoped. But the village and the partnership of car dealers Joe Levy and Eugene Fanning are still ready to make their bargain work. The car dealers want the land. The village wants to help with a \$300,000 subsidy — as I.C. Industries and C.L. Carr negotiate. A lot of engines were revving...there were a few false starts...no one crossed the finish line...but the race to turn Bolingbrook into a successful center of commerce pulled into the stretch this week.



Flurry of activity puts Bolingbrook on

by Robert Norfleet

It was a watershed week for the community's growth. Property was being purchased; deals were being made; rumors were everywhere.

At the center of the activity, local leaders and lawyers danced through a frenzied mating ritual with outside investors that brought an immediate dowry of several million dollars, and vows of several millions more to come.

It had been noted on desk calendars that this was the week that Old Chicago would "close." Monday, to be specific, was set aside for watching C.L. Carr bring a couple of million dollars to town, hand it over to I.C. Industries, and then get to work on his plan for the Old Chicago property.

It wasn't quite that easy. The closing, in fact, is still taking place. But all parties to the transaction are convinced now that this mystery man from Missouri can do the deal and all that's left is the complex blessing that only the lawyers can do.

Out of it all, Bolingbrook got the automobile dealer that was wanted for the property. At the same time, another new automobile dealer opted for a space north of the highway. A well known and well fixed Will County personality plunked down his money to buy a 60-acre piece on Ill. Rt. 53 next to Eagle. (That's a little bigger than the Old Chicago property.)

Romeoville officials were buzzing about a possible development that includes property the village owns on the north side of I-55. How big a development? Ten times the size of Old Chicago, that's how big.

And that's how the week was going.

Rt. 53 work set to start

The state of Illinois will begin major roadwork repairs to Ill. Rt. 53 from Crest Hill through Romeoville and north to I-55 beginning in approximately two weeks.

The work is being contracted in two parts: from Crest Hill to Taylor Road in Romeoville at a cost of slightly more than \$1 million; and from Joliet Road in Romeoville north to I-55 in Bolingbrook, at a cost of just under \$1 million.

Leininger Mid-States Paving Company of Hillside was awarded each of the two state contracts. The work is expected to be completed by next June, with promises that the highway will be at least passable during construction, including during the winter months.

SOME ROUGH spots came. Local developer Gurrie Rhoads was not satisfied with the way the Bolingbrook board had put the Old Chicago deal together.

Rhoads, who controls all the vacant property from Ill. Rt. 53 to where his Quadrangle shops and office complex is built, and also the Prairie Mountain amusement area, has had several disputes with village officials recently.

Among other things, he asked officials to recognize that they were providing money and assistance to a stranger from another state (who was recently convicted of bank fraud) while they were collecting money from Prairie Mountain and threatening to close it.

When his complaints were ignored, Rhoads filed suit. Once his misgivings were aired to his satisfaction, he withdrew the suit and allowed the proceedings to continue.

Continue to where? It's a good question and one that deserves an answer.

No one knows for sure.

Surely, there will be additional projects announced soon for the Old Chicago property besides the car dealer. Several prospects are standing and waiting.

Surely, some use will be proposed for the building itself. It has not surfaced yet, however, and the smart money is on demolition.

Surely, the Dominick's shopping center will attract a clutch of high quality retail tenants, to everyone's delight. Surely, these new car dealers will be successful and bring lots of sales tax money to the village treasury, as well as good service to their local customers.

SURELY, THE development of the important piece north of Eagle will become a high class asset to the Bolingbrook business community. Surely, Bolingbrook is destined to very shortly become the retail center for all the I-55 communities.

The handsome new spec building near the Bolingbrook Medical Center will gradually be filled with business tenants. The Merci Medical Center on the north side of town, just starting construction, will be busy soon after its first building is complete.

There are many more such projects at some stage of development — many more people who are looking at the area and laying their plans.

Those grand plans are hard to get in focus. Many people will settle for success in a few smaller doses. Take the success of Prairie Fields Restaurant (nee Mr. Quick), one of the tiny handful of local businesses that has ever been expanded. Nick says that by Thanksgiving he'll have the place transformed into a full-menu family restaurant that seats more than

200, and guarantees good food and service. What more could we want, really.

Nick's promises were shaped with concrete this week. Dominick's is just pushing dirt around. The other big dealers are still pushing papers. But it's coming. It's really coming.

This week's activity was a rehearsal, played in boring offices about empty fields (and one empty, useless building). Next time, and next time, we'll more easily see the images arise from the conference table.

One developer to village income

Not everyone was pleased with the proposal that would allow the village of Bolingbrook to give financial incentives to developers of Old Chicago.

Gurrie Rhoads, for one, had several questions that disturbed him, questions that he felt he hadn't gotten answers on. So, the local developer who built the Quadrangle shopping center and Prairie Mountain amusement center in Bolingbrook filed suit to get the answers.

The suit was filed last Friday, but has since been withdrawn, following conversations Rhoads had with members of Bolingbrook's LDC, the group that conceived the Old Chicago economic incentive plan.

At the heart of Rhoads' complaint is the feeling of unfairness he has.

"How fair is it for the village to subsidize one kind of commercial development and make charges on another without some kind of well thought out and well-stated statement," Rhoads asks.

In June, the village threatened to shut down Prairie Mountain because the developer owed some \$115,000 to the village for public improvements. Three months later, the village proposes to give \$300,000 to a car dealer to open a lot on Old Chicago property. The Prairie Mountain issue continues to be tied up in the courts and, Rhoads acknowledges, "a thorn in everyone's side."

Rhoads says he withdrew his suit because he did not want to block the village/Levy purchase of six acres of Old Chicago parking lot, a buy that was to be finalized last Monday (see separate story).

He still has questions, though, ones that were outlined in the quo warranto court complaint. Rhoads clarifies that his suit did not allege wrong doing on the part of the village, but requested judicial review of the legal means by which the

Vertical File



Ref. File Vertical File
bolingbrook

BB - Old Chicago

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INVITATION TO PRESS CONFERENCE

TO: ALL MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES
FROM: ROBERT L. KOLODZIEJ, VILLAGE MANAGER
TELEPHONE: (312) 759-0410
DATE: JANUARY 30, 1986

OLD CHICAGO REDEVELOPMENT

You are hereby invited to attend a press conference to be held at the Village of Bolingbrook, Village Hall, located at 375 W. Briarcliff Road, Bolingbrook, Illinois at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, February 3, 1986. This press conference has been called regarding the redevelopment of the Old Chicago site including the demolition of the building known as Old Chicago and which had operated as an indoor amusement park with certain other ancillary uses.

Present will be the Mayor and Village Board of Trustees of the Village of Bolingbrook, the members of the Bolingbrook Local Development Corporation, Mr. Wence Cerne from I. C. Industries and representatives from the demolition contractor.

The redevelopment of Old Chicago is an exciting opportunity for the Village of Bolingbrook and I. C. Industries in providing a new economic hub in our community located at the intersection of Interstate 55 and Route 53.



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(312) 759-0400

Robert L. Bailey
Village President

Bonnie S. Austgen
Village Clerk

Press Conf. 2/3/86

During this press conference, we will be unveiling the new development plans for this site, which is located strategically in the Chicago metropolitan area. This site will have even greater economic potential due to the construction of the proposed North/South Tollway also proposed to intersect at I-55 in the Village of Bolingbrook.

RLK/sav

cc: President and Board of Trustees
Members of the Local Development Corporation
Village Staff

... Old Chicago's story

★ The year of 1982 ★

January, 1982

• Speculators looking for a place to establish a gambling casino in the state propose Old Chicago as a logical site. Meanwhile, the village remains confident that LaPrade and associates will finalize their buy, but nothing comes of it.

February, 1982

• Bolingbrook absolutely refuses to entertain the notion that Old Chicago become a gambling casino. "No, no, no!"

April, 1982

• "Retail center" is all that anyone will say about the building's future. Rumors are denied that the current buyers aren't paying their monthly rent to IC.

June, 1982

• Buyer Charles Woods of California has until the end of the month to pick up his option on Old Chicago.

• In the meantime, the dome hits the auction block. Some 140 bid packets are mailed out, but the auction is cancelled when no qualified bids come in. Suggested opening bid: \$5.4 million.

Summer, 1982

• The village adopts a restrictive demolition ordinance to discourage talk by IC of tearing down the building. "We still want a buyer," is the village sentiment.

October, 1982

• Charles Woods quietly lets his option expire by not paying the \$100,000 monthly rent to hold the building.

• Reports of deteriorating roof and structural damage surface, particularly if IC decides not to heat the building over the winter, a move opposed by village hall.

November, 1982

• Village demolition rules and regs are hauled out and new sections added that would make demolition cost-prohibitive. "Maybe this will make them think twice before demolishing Old Chicago," says mayor Ed Rosenthal.

★ The year of 1983 ★

January, 1983

• Demolition bids sit on the desks of IC officials, but a prospective buyer give the building a stay of execution.

Mid-winter, 1983

• The fire protection system is turned off. A ticket is issued to IC by the fire department for code violation. The sprinkler system is not turned back on and is reportedly being partially dismantled.

July, 1983

• A growing tide of sentiment rises to raze Old Chicago.

For the first time, village trustees show little interest in saving the building, but officials find themselves in a bind.

On the other hand, putting the building in dry dock by turning off the fire sprinkler system violates village codes. On the other hand, resistance to dry-docking by the village may encourage demolition by IC.

Trustees Roger Claar and Jim Meyer say, "Who cares?"

Mayor Ed Rosenthal says, "Why give up? It doesn't cost the village anything to try to keep selling the building."

September, 1983

• Two men are arrested breaking into Old Chicago. Police acknowledge a growing and persistent problem with vandals at the boarded up amusement park.

November, 1983

• The continual problem with trespassers leads to a proposal by IC to put

barbed wire fencing around the property. It's refused by the village's ZBA, which

doesn't want the place to look like "Stateville North."



★ The year of 1984 ★

Winter, 1984

• There's no heat, except between IC, which wants to tear down the building, and the village, which is trying to delay demolition with hopes of finding a buyer.

Literally dozens, if not hundreds, of speculators have toured the boarded up building over its closed years, but the village is gunshy of announcing buyers in the wake of so many earlier disappointments.

June, 1984

A Missouri gentleman and land speculator specializing in "distressed properties," C.L. Carr, puts some money down, signs a purchase agreement with IC Industries, and is introduced around town with optimism.

The undisclosed purchase price is estimated at close to \$3 million, not much higher than the original price of the land alone.

Carr does not say what he'll do with the building except to promise that it will be glittery — perhaps an entertainment capital.

July, 1984

A shocked Bolingbrook learns that option-holder C.L. Carr is convicted of bank fraud in Arkansas, stemming from "sham loans" to get money in names of friends when Carr was not credit worthy.

No one in Bolingbrook or at IC Industries knew about Carr's legal problems and pending conviction on charges of bank fraud.

Other than "No comment," sources close to the Missouri land speculator say that Carr's conviction will not stop his purchase of Old Chicago.

August, 1984

• Despite a conviction for bank fraud, buyer C.L. Carr is moving quickly to convert Old Chicago into useful property. Local developer Bill Palmer is his agent.

It seems that Carr's plan is to demolish the building and subdivide the land. One car dealer is said to be interested in buying a piece of the land.

★ The year of 1985 ★

September, 1985

• Car dealer Joe Levy buys a corner of Old Chicago property, thus sealing the prospect that the building will be leveled so the land can be sold for other things.

The property is officially labeled "blighted" by village ordinance. The land is worth more than the building, say officials

The village acts as middle man in the sale, putting up some \$300,000 so Levy can afford the property. Levy will repay the village its investment through credits for the sales taxes Levy's auto dealerships bring the village.

IC Industries still owns the rest of the property, but C.L. Carr maintains that he's still going to take it off the hands of the conglomerate.

January, 1985

• The dome may not be doomed after all, says Bill Palmer. For six months every would-be buyer has talked of turning the building into an entertainment/assembly facility. "An indoor Poplar Creek" is one suggestion.

But no one has put up any money. C.L. Carr technically still holds an option, but is not actively marketing the property.

(continued on page 9)

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... Old Chicago's story

[continued from page 7]

June, 1985

• The steady stream of prospective buyers now includes Elliott Glassner, owner of Keystone and Stroud realty companies.

• The LDC says it won't accept any buyer without a specific plan to turn the building into a convention center site that would attract hotels and related facilities. Glassner speaks of a warehouse operation, and disappears.

July, 1985

• Village and IC agree to demolish the dome. C.L. Carr has until July 31, 1985 to come up with the purchase price or demolition orders are signed.

The site is to be cleared and ready to sell off in pieces.

August, 1985

• The final attempt to sell Old Chicago fizzles. No option is picked up. While the sands ran out, Old Chicago's weathered carcass is being stripped of whatever portable values remain.

Mayor Bob Bailey salvages used Christmas tree decorations, the flume ride fountain, and passle of souvenirs and equipment still left under the dome.

The lions escape the mayor, and end up at Bolingbrook Auto Centre, still on property once part of Old Chicago.

November, 1985

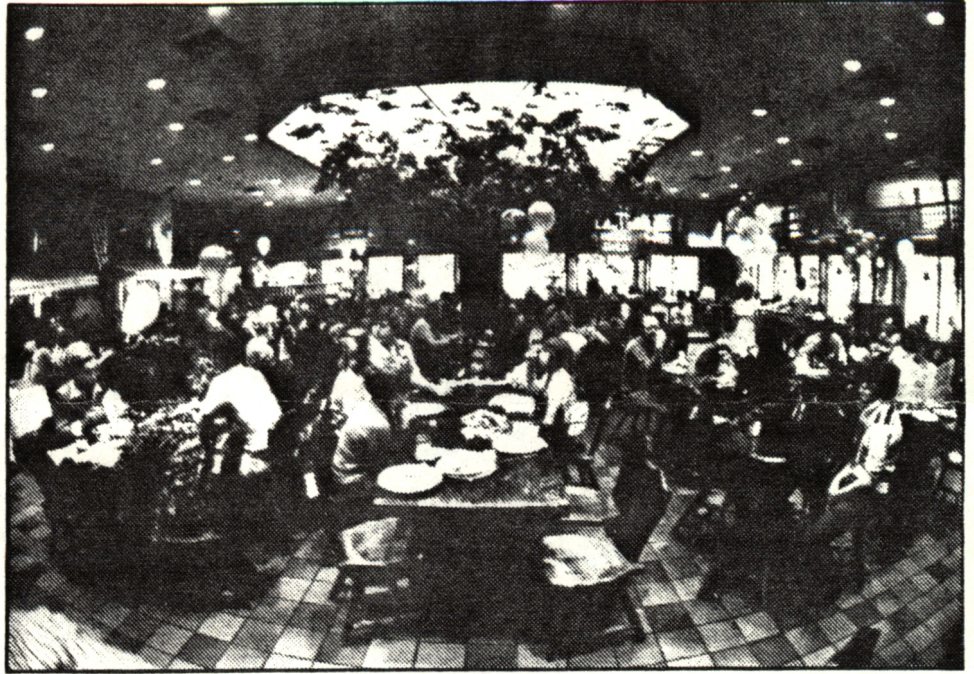
• Demolition is pending, but county board chairman John Annerino makes one more bid to save the building. He wants to sell it to the People's Republic of China for an international trade center.

Annerino is taking former LDC president Frank Rousseau with him to China to seal the deal.

December, 1985

• Politicians intervene long enough to give John Annerino time to go to China and sell the property for a trade center, much to mayor Bob Bailey's dismay.

Annerino does not return with a signed contract and cash, but he claims to have a letter of intent from the Chinese to buy the building.



A toast to Old Chicago in the Beer Garden.

★ The year of 1986 ★

January, 1986

• John Annerino hopes to bring the 1992 World's Fair to Will County and suggests Old Chicago as a possible site, while still contending that the People's Republic of China also wants to buy it.

• A week later, the village signs the actual demolition order.

February, 1986

• Village hosts a "media event" to persuade the world that demolition of Old Chicago is a fresh start.

A model depicting hypothetical development of the property with a variety of uses is shown by the LDC, but there are no "hot prospects."

John Annerino nearly steals the thunder from the village by showing his letter of intent from the Chinese to the television cameras.

To convince Annerino that no one is willing to listen to his suggestions, an exterior wall is knocked down on the building, denying its use for anything, once and for all.

March, 1986

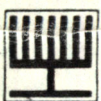
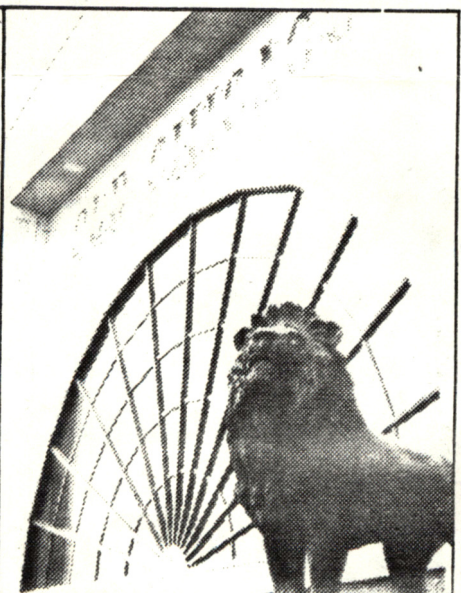
Piles of rubble grow along Rt. 53 just south of I-55 as Old Chicago's walls tumble.

April, 1986

• The dome quietly sinks into the sunset with absolutely no fanfare.

• By the end of the month, not a trace of the former amusement park remains, but memories.

The End



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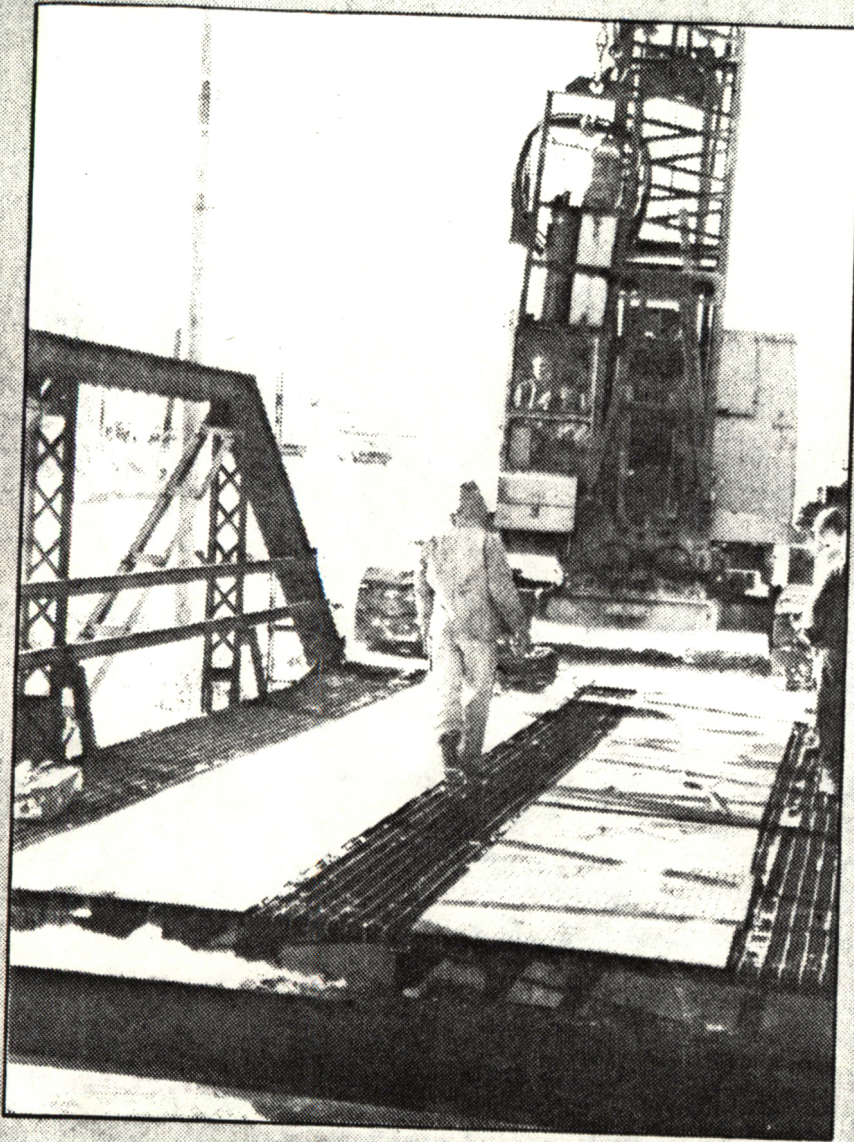
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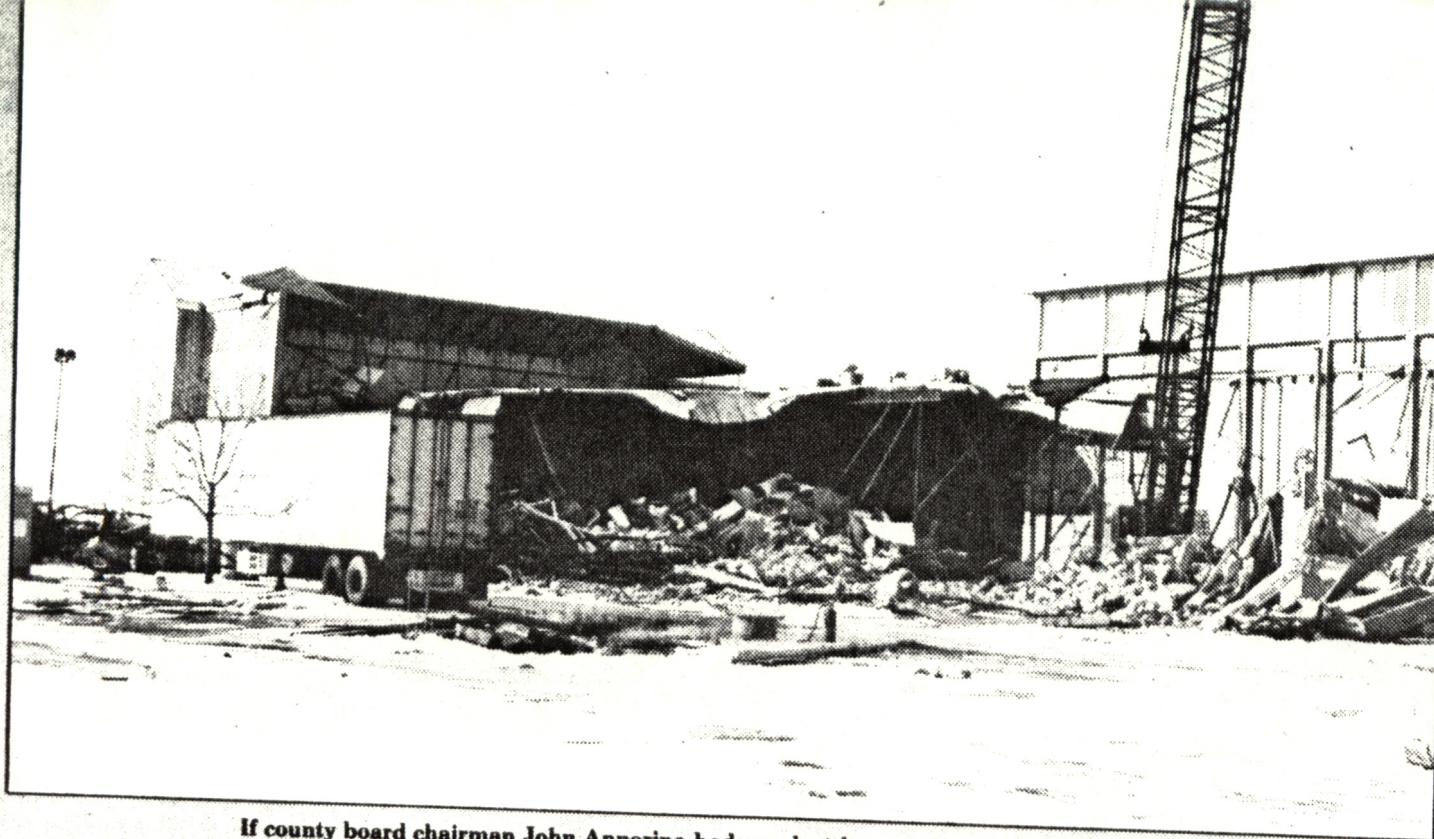
BB Old Chicago ✓



Bolingbrook collapsing at each end

[Photos by Phil Medalis]
At the north and south ends, Bolingbrook is collapsing — or at least, two major controversial structures are being destroyed. At the north end of town [upper left] crews begin dismantling Royce Road bridge after years of political hassling over who would fix it. The village is, with a federal grant, and a new bridge should be open in May. Old Chicago's walls are literally tumbling now, too [upper right]. Not only has the inside been gutted by crews, but the south wall is going, going, gone, as of this week.

*The Post 2/3/86
P 2*



If county board chairman John Annerino had any last hopes of saving Old Chicago for the Chinese, those hopes were dashed once he viewed the wreckage of the first exterior wall to be demolished at Old Chicago.

Public works employees get OK for union, too

Two disputed labor issues between Bolingbrook village and unionizing employees have been settled.

The issues concerned retroactive raises to union employees and recognition of a second group of employees that wished to join a union.

The village will now voluntarily recognize the Public Works Association's decision to join AFSCME. AFSCME is the American Federation of State, County

and Municipal Employees, an affiliate of the AFL-CIO.

When public works employees meet at the bargaining table to negotiate their next contract, they will do so with union representatives. The current public works contract expires May 1 of this year.

Earlier this year, clerical staff and police dispatchers formed their collective bargaining unit and affiliated with AFSCME.

Over the months that the clerks and dispatchers sought and finally won recognition for their union-affiliation they were granted no salary increases, though other employees received raises at the start of the village's fiscal year.

The village and AFSCME now agree that those employees will receive three percent across-the board salary increases retroactive to May 1, the fiscal year start.

The village had originally argued that a salary increase for employees that were requesting collection bargaining should wait until the salary and benefit package were negotiated.

Village officials say now that the settlement of these two points should make for a "more harmonious working relationship with the management and staff of Bolingbrook."

Ref. File
Chicago
BB Old Chic

Old Chicago: dem

Site to be transformed into a commercial park

by Jane Lelugas

It will be out with the "old" and in with the new at the Old Chicago site, located on Route 53 just south of the I-55 interchange in Bolingbrook.

Formal plans for the demolition of the 490,000-square-foot structure, which formerly housed the nation's first indoor amusement park, were announced at a press conference held at Bolingbrook Village Hall on Monday.

Brandenberg Demolition, Inc., of Chicago, will begin the process within the next week, first by dismantling and removing any salvageable items still left within the building, and then continuing the demolition with cranes and wrecking balls. No explosives will be used, according to Village Manager Robert Kolodziej.

Demolition should be completed within two to three months, he estimated.

Though the decision to go ahead with the demolition has been made, it was not an easy one for Village officials to make, according to Village President Robert Bailey.

"One of the problems we've had over the years with Old Chicago was that it was such an attractive building that it was really hard to let go. People would see old Chicago and say 'there has to be a use for this building,'" said Bailey.

The Old Chicago operation went bankrupt in 1980 and then closed in 1981, after six years of high operating costs and few customers.

The Village of Bolingbrook led an aggressive, six-year campaign to find a new buyer and a new use for the property, but to no avail. Though over 20 options were considered for the site, including a factory-direct outlet mall, a gambling casino and a hospital, none of the proposals materialized.

"It is time to take Old Chicago down," said Village President Ro-

bert Bailey. "We have struggled to find a new use, but it seems to be a one-use building."

That use, according to Bailey, might have worked had it come ten years later, with easier highway access to the property available.

Village officials believe that the demolition of Old Chicago is not an end, but a new beginning.

Village officials, along with representatives from the Bolingbrook Local Development Corporation (LDC) and IC Industries, the owner of the Old Chicago property, have proposed what they say is a better alternative — Old Chicago Park.

The plans call for a commercial, light industrial and office complex, where buildings would be designed in a campus-like setting across the 57 acres available for development.

Village officials said they are excited about the possibilities the redevelopment could bring to the area, but stressed that no commitments have been made yet, and a developer would have to be found who would be willing to pursue the plan. IC Industries has stated it is not in the development business.

Bolingbrook Auto Centre, which will house at least three dealerships once it is completed, has already opened for business on the northeast portion of the proposed complex.

Jeff Entratter, dealership manager and co-owner, was enthusiastic about the plans for redevelopment.

"I believe this will be the next Downers Grove-Naperville," said Entratter.

James Cox, president of the BLDC, described the parcel as a "fine piece of inventory" as well as a "keystone and cornerstone" of the community.

Its location along I-55 should make the property even more attractive once FAP 431, the proposed north-south tollway, which should be under construction by summer, is completed, according to Kolodziej.

Annerino still trying to save Old Chicago

Demolition is not progress.

Not in this case, according to John Annerino, Will County Board Chairman. Annerino has spent the last three months trying to negotiate the sale of the Old Chicago property to Chinese officials, who are interested in locating an international trade center in the area, the first of its kind in the United States.

Annerino said that Chinese officials were still looking for a U.S. partner for the \$32,000,000 trade center.

"It is still a viable deal," he told those gathered at Bolingbrook's Village Hall on Monday to hear plans for demolition of the approximate 11-acre facility.

Village President Robert Bailey

contended that it would probably cost more money to renovate the building than to tear it down and start from scratch.

"To renovate the building as it stands now I feel would be totally impossible," Bailey commented.

"Nothing's impossible," Annerino countered, adding that the former indoor amusement park structure was not a "one-use" building.

"In the event that this thing (a sale) does materialize in the next couple of weeks, we certainly will look at it," said Bailey.

If Old Chicago is torn down before negotiations are completed, Annerino said that he would then look for other sites within Will County for the proposed Chinese trade center.

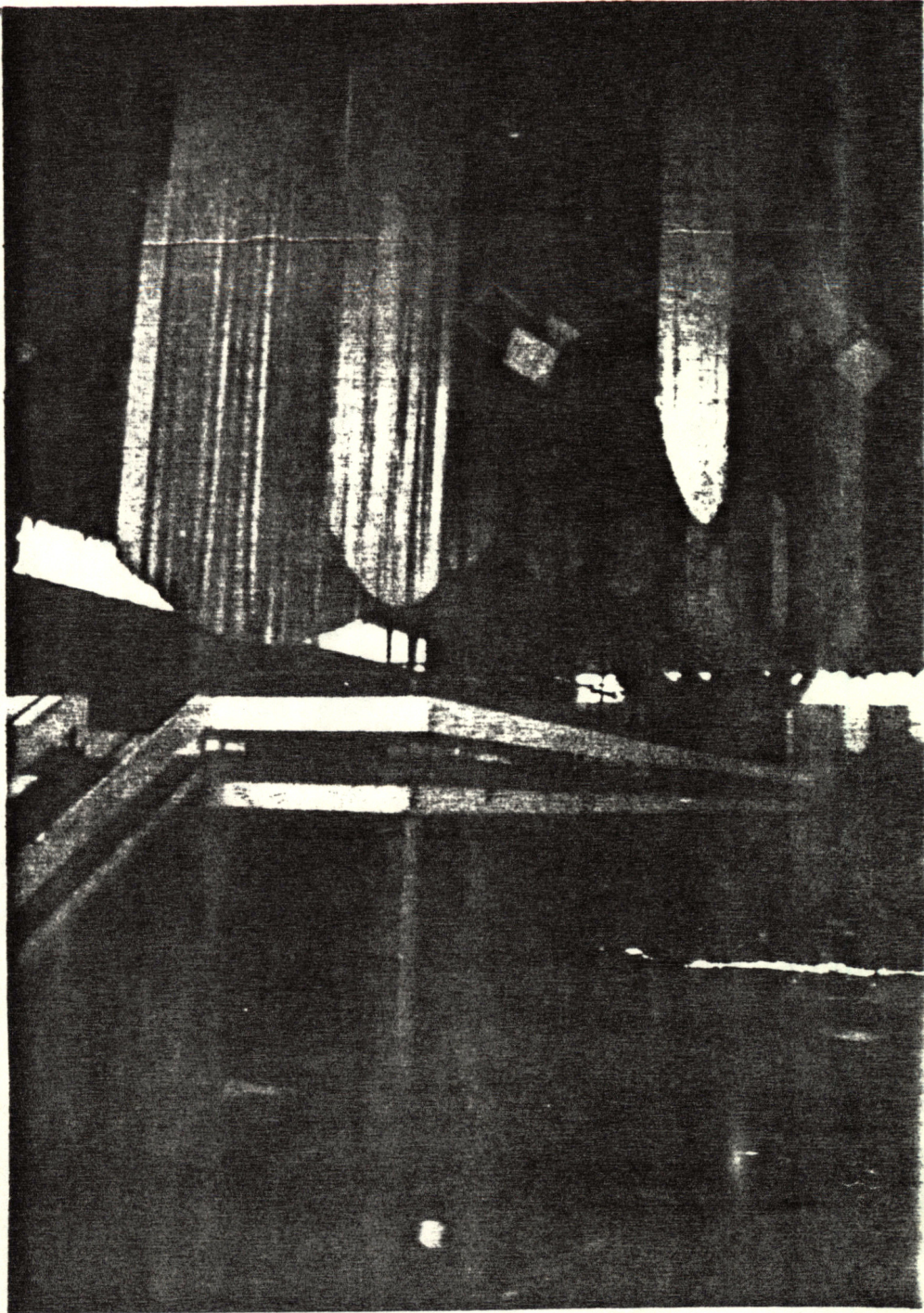
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The Sun
Feb. 5, 1986

olition or sale?

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REFERENCE



For those who remember the inside of Old Chicago, and for those who do not, this may be one of the last glimpses Bolingbrook residents will get before the structure is dismantled and demolished.

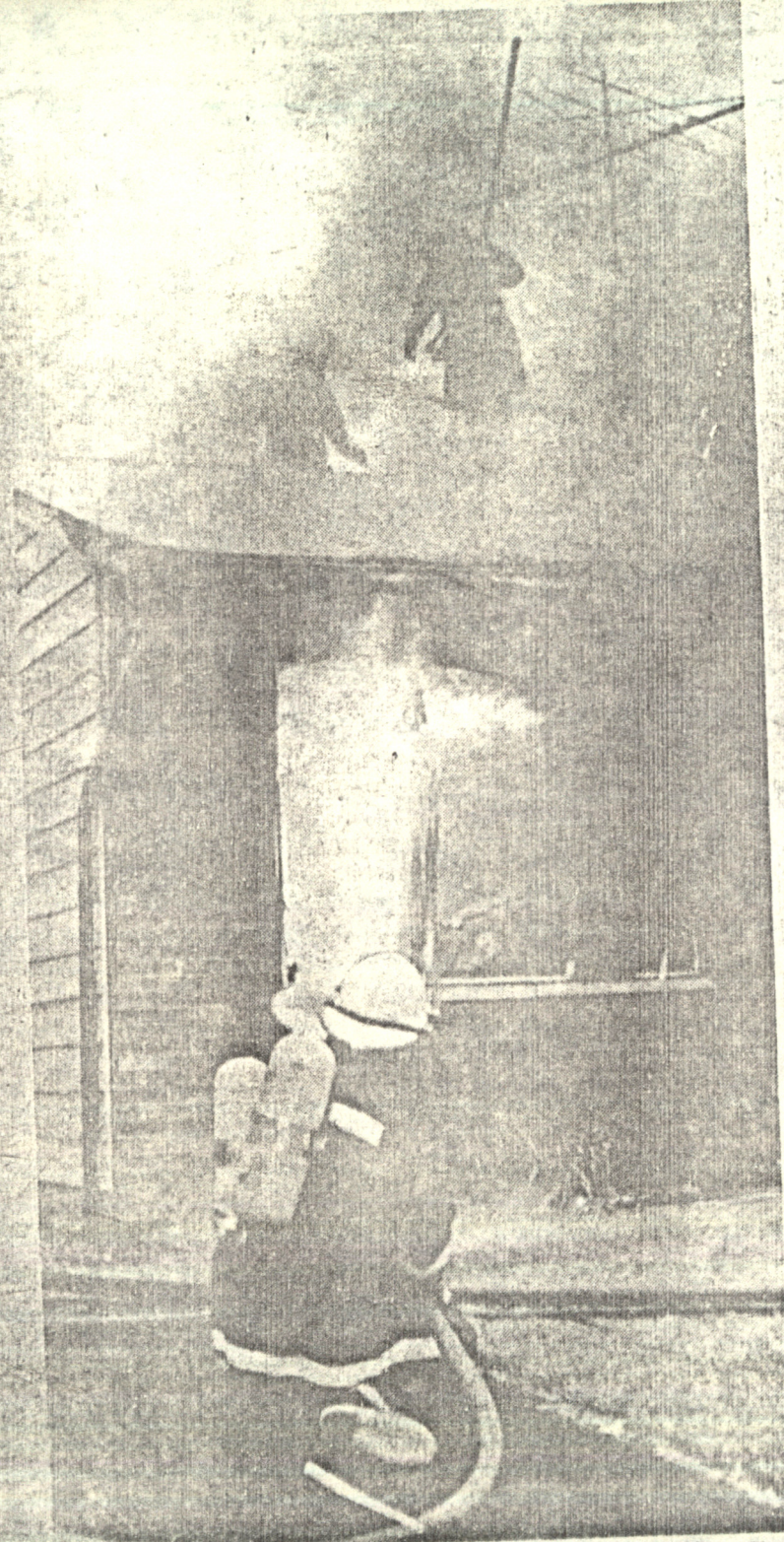


Village President Robert Bailey, top left, Village Manager Robert Kolodziej, front center, and Wence Cerne, vice president of I.C. Industries, were among the officials present at Monday's press conference to answer questions about the demolition of Old Chicago, scheduled to occur over the next few months, as well as the redevelopment of the site.

(Photos by Roger Legel)

*The Sun
Feb. 5, 1986*

Vertical file



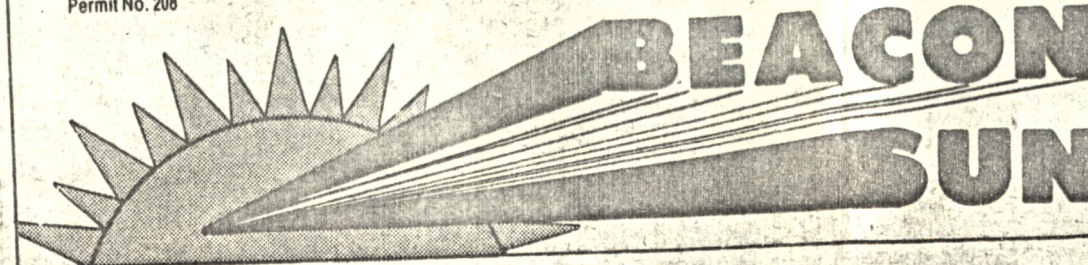
(Photo by Pat Van Doren)

BATTLING BLAZE: Bolingbrook firefighters work

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Bolingbrook Edition

25¢



Wednesday, June 20, 1984

Volume 22, No. 25

60 pages

Old Chicago purchased, but use not determined

Bolingbrook's Village President Edward Rosenthal received a nice birthday present Friday night, and the rest of the Village received quite a pleasant surprise as well, when it was announced at the annual dinner of the Chamber of Commerce that Old Chicago had been sold that day.

C.L. Carr, a developer from Springfield, Mo., appeared at the dinner to confirm that he had signed a contract that day with IC Equities, subsidiary of IC Industries, to purchase the Old Chicago building, which has been closed since 1980.

Barbara Kattermann, Executive Director of the Bolingbrook Local Development Corporation (BLDC), introduced Carr to the dinner guests, and stated that a contract had been signed on an as-is basis for the property.

Carr, who reportedly deals in "distressed" properties, was said to have a successful history of buying both

Carr had not disclosed his plans to IC Industries. He called the sale a simple real estate transaction.

Although no one is certain of the selling price, speculation placed it at about \$4,000,000, since an earlier attempt to auction the property failed to elicit a single bid at the starting price of \$5,000,000.

Mrs. Kattermann said on Monday that Carr buys properties that are vacant, or are viable businesses, but some of which appear to be "On the way out." She said he then "turns them around," sometimes selling them afterward.

The full contract, with money down, was signed Friday, even though Carr's plans for the property were not final, she said. "His first priority was to get control of the property, then figure out the use," Mrs. Kattermann said.

She admitted that he did have some idea before the purchase of what he would do with it, but she de-

property. He said she was the person who had to do most of the work on the project, and she deserved a great deal of credit for it. He also noted that the creation of the BLDC as a "hybrid" organization, combining business and government members, had also assisted in completing the project.

This week, Mrs. Kattermann said that Carr is currently gathering national marketing information in order to determine a use for Old Chicago. The information being gathered includes data on retailing and entertainment.

Previously, one of the most frequently-discussed uses for the building was a combination "off-price" retail center for the shop area, and an entertainment facility in the center of the building for concerts and similar activities. The property would be able to handle that type of use, since the building is 500,000 square feet, and the total property measures 57 acres, with large parking

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(Photo by Pat Van Doren)

BATTLING BLAZE: Bolingbrook firefighters work to bring the blaze under control during last Wednesday's house fire at 172 N. Ashbury ave. Although the house sustained heavy fire and smoke damage, there were no injuries in the incident.

Arson guilty plea nets five-year term

William Perkins, 29, of Bolingbrook, received a five-year prison sentence June 4 after pleading guilty to a charge of arson, stemming from a Jan. 25 fire at his residence on Elm court in Bolingbrook.

According to a spokesman for the State's Attorney's office, Perkins was sentenced by Judge Pistilli to the five-year term, which will start in two weeks.

Perkins and Douglas Hamilton, 20, 309 B Woodcreek road, Bolingbrook, charged with arson and conspiracy after Bolingbrook firefighters extinguished two separate fires at 17 Elm court, one which apparently

had been started between the garage and the kitchen and one in an upstairs bathroom.

Shortly after the blaze, Perkins reported that several items had been taken from the residence and claimed that a burglar had set the fire.

After an investigation, Bolingbrook police arrested Perkins and Hamilton on charges that they had removed the items from the residence and set the fire themselves. Damage to the dwelling was estimated at \$18,000.

Hamilton has not yet been tried on the charges filed against him.

Stereo short-circuit causes dwelling fire

A short-circuit in a stereo is named as the cause of a house fire last Tuesday morning at 341 Lyons dr., Bolingbrook.

According to Fire Department reports, Florence Migler summoned the aid of firefighters when the blaze spread to the stereo cabinet and surrounding carpet. Actual fire damage was confined to the living room, but smoke damage was sustained in other rooms in the house.

There were no injuries in the blaze, which caused an estimated \$3,000 damage to the residence.

was said to have a successful history of buying both commercial and apartment properties which were in trouble and turning them into money-making operations.

Carr told the crowd at the dinner that he was still considering various uses for the property, and was currently conducting a marketing study. He added that he expected the facility to be open within nine months.

Len Carlman, president of IC Equities, confirmed on Monday that a contract has been signed with Carr. He stated that his company had been negotiating with Carr over a period of several months.

The purchase price is a "matter of confidence," said Carlman. He added that

have some idea before the purchase of what he would like to do with it, but she declined to discuss it further, saying his plans might change.

William Palmer, president of the BLDC, addressing the dinner guests last Friday, said everyone would be working hard to make Old Chicago something positive. He added later that Carr had passed the most stringent credit checks which IC Industries had ordered.

Palmer also noted that Carr was the only prospective purchaser who was able to come up with the money for the building, without having to borrow it.

Palmer praised the efforts of Mrs. Kattermann as executive director of the BLDC in arranging the sale of the

500,000 square feet, and total property measures 57 acres, with large parking lots.

Although board members of the BLDC were not willing to list the discount retail sales and entertainment center as the top choice for Old Chicago, they did admit it was among the possible uses being considered.

Closing on the property sale is scheduled 90 days from last Friday. Carr is scheduled to return to Bolingbrook later this week, with some of his "key people," according to Palmer, for further discussions and planning sessions.

Palmer said the BLDC will continue to work with Carr and assist him in any way possible.



(Photo by Frank Gist)

C.L. Carr, (center) the new owner of Old Chicago, was introduced to guests at the Chamber of Commerce annual dinner held last Friday, by Bolingbrook Village President Edward Rosenthal (right). Bolingbrook Local Development Corporation executive director Barbara Kattermann is at left, and BLDC president William Palmer is shown in the background.

... Old Chicago's story

★ The year of 1978 ★

January, 1978

• Following the \$6 million revitalization of the amusement area, the mall undergoes new "zoning" to group specialty shops together under eight new themes.

May, 1978

• The assessed valuation of Old Chicago is reduced by the state's Property Tax Appeal Board, from \$6.6 million to \$4 million.

The reduction stems from an appeal by the owners that they are just barely surviving.

The tax reduction might help business, but local taxing bodies, especially Valley View school district, is expected to be hit severely by the tax cut, and the district may seek legal recourse.

• Rumors also circulate that (the first) buyer's negotiating for the purchase of the property, with an estimated purchase and rehab cost of \$40 million.

June, 1978

• Jaycees have to defend themselves against citizen complaints about holding the annual fireworks display at Old Chicago. It's not comfortable, say residents, who also indicate that they don't care to do anything that might also benefit the park. Jaycee president Tom Delaney answers that since Old Chicago picks up part of the tab, the Jaycees can put on a bigger fireworks show at the amusement park.

August, 1978

• First of the shut-downs. Old Chicago is closed to the general public on Mondays and Tuesdays, though it can open for large groups such as company outings which rent the park for the day.

October, 1978

"Contrary to rumors, Old Chicago is not evicting its merchants or converting the facility into a sports complex," says Dick Evans (another new management person).

★ The year of 1979 ★

February, 1979

• A fire in the Old Chicago Tobacco Company is doused quickly after tobacco goes up in smoke as it is being dried by electric heaters. There are no sprinklers in the storage area where the tobacco dried.

March, 1979

• The management team rethinks the shopping mall. Namely, all the stores are shifted to the front area near the entrance.

• Meanwhile, management also denies low attendance during winter months, claiming that the concerts and weekly discos keep bringing in customers.

May, 1979

• Another new game plan for Old Chicago, this time the suggestion that bowling alley and theaters be added.

A management spokesman admits for the first time that amusement rides and shopping might not be compatible — thus the notion of adding more recreational kinds of facilities to the mall area.

July, 1979

• The professional fireworks display that Old Chicago hires in lieu of the Jaycees blows up in their faces literally when a spark ignites all the bombs and bursts prematurely. Only one technician suffers first and second degree burns, in addition to minor injuries to a 6-year-old but most of the crowd is safe behind barricades.

• Admission to the Fun Factory is no longer cheaper. People have to pay the full freight to get into the park even if they just want to take their 5-year-old to the Kiddy Fun Factory.

★ The year of 1980 ★

January, 1980

• Old Chicago announces plans to construct new concert stage with a new three-way sound system for its "Live at Old Chicago" concert series. They want to "create a more acoustically-perfect sound system..." as if the concerts would just go on forever.

March, 1980

• OLD CHICAGO SHUT FOREVER

Work begins to dismantle the amusement rides. Shops can remain open for some time. Some will. Most won't.

Foreclosure proceedings are filed by IC Industries actually against itself as a general partner of Old Chicago Towne Partners.

Officials say that the foreclosure and shut-down is a move to help sell the property for another use. In fact, negotiations with potential buyers have started, officials report.

An IC spokesman states privately that IC might be willing to take a loss of as much as \$13 million to sell off Old Chicago.

May, 1980

• "Largest Indoor Park Becomes Largest Discount Mall."

• A contract to buy Old Chicago is signed to turn the world's largest indoor park into America's largest factory outlet mall.

Outlet mall investors, headed by Roy Cohn, board chairman of Weber Cohn and Riley advertising and public relations

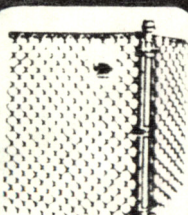
[continued on page 5]

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Elliott sentenced to prison for local real estate scam

The man who was known as the real estate ace around Bolingbrook, the owner of the local limo — Bolingbrook's own millionaire, — was sentenced to a year and a day last Friday by a federal judge.

Jim Elliott was convicted a month ago in connection with defrauding the Veterans and Federal Housing administration home loan programs. He was found guilty of 10 counts of mail fraud and nine counts of filing false statements with the federal government.

Elliott used relatives to buy seven Bolingbrook houses by lying on low-interest loan applications from the federal government.

In sentencing Elliott, U.S. district court judge Susan Getzendanner made note that she had received a letter from a deputy director of the Federal Home Loan Bank Board claiming that Elliott also "single-handedly brought down Manning Savings and Loan."

U.S. Attorney Robert Briesblatt, chief prosecutor in the case, also outlined grand jury investigations into Elliott's financial and real estate involvements, as well as those of his wife, the former Judy Pilot, another Bolingbrook real estate salesman.

The couple now lives in Naperville with their seven-month-old daughter.



Jim
Elliott

Elliott is also targeted by the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corp. (FSLIC) in a lawsuit which resulted in foreclosure of more than \$5 million in mortgages made to him by Financial Savings and Loan Association of Downers Grove. That foreclosure forced the sale of 68 condominiums and single-family residences held by Elliott.

Elliott was characterized at the sentencing hearing by the U.S. attorney as a man who "has a lot of knowledge."

A number of Bolingbrook residents are watching the Elliott investigation developments closely. It is believed that this conviction and sentence is the top of an iceberg with implications for local people who purchased condominium properties as investments in another and later of Elliott's schemes.

Elliott contended in his hearing that he was virtually "wiped out" by his creditors, that he didn't know what he had done was illegal.

The judge reportedly recalled how Elliott amassed a net worth of more than \$12 million by 1982 and as a manic-depression personality must never have slept as he built his fortune. She said she believed Elliott knowingly defrauded and abused the federal government programs and imposed the year and a day sentence.

Coleman's cooking wins Argonne award

Willie D. Coleman of Bolingbrook, chief cook at Argonne National Laboratory, received an Outstanding Service Award.

The award consists of an engraved plaque plus \$1,000.

Coleman will be honored for his "33 years of service to

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... Old Chicago's story

[continued from page 4]

firm, promises 100 outlets of brand name goods. Sixteen companies have already requested leases, he says.

July, 1980

- Former merchants of Old Chicago's mall sue for \$5 million in a 300-age lawsuit for money they will lose in sales during the time left on their leases at the mall and for the cost of relocating.

Some merchants had as much as 3½ years left on leases before being pushed out the door once the amusement park folded. Only four businesses remain in the hollowed mall halls: House of Jade, Super T's Inc., Biergarten, and Olde Chicago Styling Salon.

- The village opposes a suggestion to board up Old Chicago.

September, 1980

- Mid-America developers regretfully announce delays in opening their discount mall. Originally set to open in August of 1980, then September, then October, they now say not until April of 1981.

Rumors are denied that they can't get manufacturers to sign on the dotted lines.

★ The year of 1981 ★

January, 1981

- The mall stalls. The April opening is postponed. The option by mall developers to buy Old Chicago actually expired at the end of 1980. There is no option renewal, though talk of some negotiations. Mall developers say major manufacturers are interested in becoming tenants, but what with high interest rates... tight money...

March, 1981

- Mayoral candidate Terry Little whips off letters to everyone in the world who has anything to do with movies or who has ever seen a movie suggesting that Old Chicago be sold as a motion picture/TV production soundstage. He is successful in getting the state of Illinois' film division to come by for a tour of the building.

June, 1981

- Three dogged survivors, the last of the mall merchants, use IC to keep the building open following an announcement by IC to shut the place entirely down.

It's costing \$50,000 a month just to keep the utilities on, among other basic expenses, says IC, when it's only collecting \$450 a month in rent. Olde Chicago Styling is the only one paying

rent. Other survivors include House of Jade and the Beer Garden.

Says Beer Garden owner Hans Gliege, "Old Chicago may be broke, but IC is a big company and they are trying to chisel us, those of us who have all of our life savings invested here."

July, 1981

- Old Chicago is ruled out as the Midwest headquarters for the Hollywood set. It won't become a soundstage. The state's film division says Old Chicago is 1) too expensive 2) too big 3) too far away from Chicago.

August, 1981

- After several postponements, Old Chicago is boarded up physically and legally and officially.

But IC Industries and village officials assure villagers that several developers, including the Mid-America outlet mall developers are still interested in purchase.

The village's economic development director, Barb Kattermann says that boarding up is really not the end, but the next step toward getting a new use for the building.

The boards follow the official bankruptcy of Olde Chicago Towne Partners. The building is estimated to be worth \$6 to \$10 million, but has \$65 million in liens against it, says one attorney.

- Can Bolingbrook survive the Double White Elephant Whammy? Old Chicago teams up with Chrysler as seven metro car dealers hold a marathon sale, pushing 700 cars over one weekend on the grounds of Old Chicago.

Fall, 1981

- Sometime as leaves were dropping from village trees, Mid-America mall developers, their saddle bags empty of sufficient cash, ride off into the sunset, never to be heard from again.

December, 1981

- Bolingbrook gets a Christmas present! OLD CHICAGO IS SOLD!

Within 18 months to two years, say new option holders, Old Chicago will reopen — as something. They're not sure quite what, but promise beaucoup sales tax dollars for the village.

Buyers include A.T. LaPrade, Harold Friend and Roy R. Moore Jr. each of whom carry impressive credentials in either shopping center development, international sales, cattle breeding, or selling tires.

Until the sale closes they'll pay IC Industries an undisclosed amount in monthly rent on the closed building with purchase and rehab estimated to total \$20 million.

Bolingbrook

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A favorite daily entertainer on the mall: the organ grinder and his coin-snatching monkey. Inside and

out. Old Chicago depicted the era of the 1893 Columbian exposition.

ome brought stars to Bolingbrook

Springsteen, Madonna, Cyndi Lauper, Hall & Oates never played Old Chicago. They came too late.

Many a headliner did tromp through Bolingbrook to play a one-nighter at Old Chicago.

There was, of course, an assorted group of "world famous" lesser known acts such as Marshal Brodien's magic show. He even ran a magic shop on the Old Chicago mall and before moving on to the nation's "Bozo's Circus."

There was local magician and escape artist Tom Rozoff, and a host of circus acts, including polka bands at the Biergarten, and the local community theatre group remodeled a storefront for its performances for a two-year period in the 1970s.

There were real stars, too. One of the first and most notorious was the fan dancer, Sally Rand, who performed in September of 1975 and even starred in the Pathways Parade. She died to have been age 71 at the time. In order of appearance and not necessarily notoriety, here's some of the

1975

Bobby Rydell (and 1979)
Ramsey Lewis Trio
New Kingston Trio
Wayne Cochran & CC riders

1976

Buffalo Bob Smith, without Howdy Doody, appeared to ask, "OK, gang, what time is it?"

Susan of "Sesame Street" (Loretta Long)

1977

"The Human Torch"
Superman and Lois Lane

1978

R2D2, along with Darth Vader, Chewbacca, and C3PO
Bo Diddley
Freddie "Boom Boom" Cannon
Gary "U.S." Bonds

The Coasters

The Turks

Rickie Havens

The Shirelles

Harvey Mandell

Blood, Sweat & Tears

1979

Chubby Checker (The Twist)

Soap Operafest — Stars of "General Hospital," "One Life to Live," "Ryan's Hope," "All My Children"

1979

Starfest Fourth of July Fest — featuring fireworks (which blew up), Chuck Berry, Chubby Checker, Willie Aimes, Black Oak Arkansas, hot air balloon races

Jan & Dean

Conway Twitty

The Hudson Brothers (stars and then-pop kids show, "Razzle Dazzle")

Gloria Gaynor

The Guess Who

England Dan & John Ford Coley

Rick Nelson

Tommy Jones

New Christy Minstrels

Kingston Trio

In late 1979, an announcement from Old Chicago management proclaiming that entertainment would be suspended temporarily as a new stage was built.

A new line up of headliners under the title of "Live at Old Chicago" was to be announced. But they never came. Three months later the park closed.

MANY TOWNS RECEIVED federal money to help pay for their plant improvements.

The last ones on the lists, including the 220 Illinois communities which got late starts in addressing the Clean Water Act, found that the federal grant money was used up.

Local officials expressed anger and frustration that the federal government is forcing the improvements, but not willing to share the burden of costs with all of the affected towns.

Village officials urge citizens to write to their congressmen and ask that more federal money be made available. Without state or federal help, water and sewer bills here could double, they say.

Bolingbrook is expected to have to make about \$6 million of improvements to its Royce Road sewage plant.

Half of that cost is to meet the EPA standards.

Half is to expand the plant, which is currently at capacity.

One prime area that is expected to develop and need water and sewer service from the village is the potential industrial corridor along the proposed north-south tollway.

WITH JUST 15 months until the July, 1988 deadline, the village is expected to announce within the month how it will pay for its \$6 million of improvements.

Construction of improvements must start this year to meet the deadline, officials say.

It was last July, of 1985, that village board members first looked at projected rate increases for sewer and water customers that would finance the improvements.

The board refused to approve those rate hikes and hoped for alternative funding.

Now that the proposal of fighting the standards and costs through a lawsuit is being dropped, it doesn't mean that the village will give up, though, says the mayor.

But it's likely that the board will have to institute rate hikes now, even if some grant money comes Bolingbrook's way in the future to relieve some of the burden.

More of Old Chicago's story continues on page 4.

Vertical File

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IC Industries finds buyer for Old Chicago mall

By David Iyata

A SPOKESMAN for the IC Equities unit of IC Industries Inc. confirmed reports Monday that the firm has found a buyer for the Old Chicago shopping mall in southwest suburban Bolingbrook.

C.L. Carr, a Springfield, Mo., developer, signed a sales agreement last Friday to pay an undisclosed price for the 500,000-square-foot center and its 57-acre site, according to Len Carlman, president of IC Equi-

ties. The deal is scheduled to close in mid-September.

IC Equities said in May it would demolish the center if a buyer could not be found.

CARR HAS not yet decided what he will do with the property, said Barbara Katterman, executive director of the Bolingbrook Local Development Corp.

"IC [Equities] was setting deadlines for demolition, and once [Carr's] preliminary marketing

showed that the building was viable, he purchased it," Katterman said. "Now his energies are focused on finding a use for the property."

Possibilities, she explained, could be to revive the center for retailing, entertainment, offices or a combination of these uses.

Katterman said Carr invests in all types of real estate and specializes in turning around troubled commercial properties and apartment complexes.

OLD CHICAGO opened in 1975 as a combined shopping center-indoor amusement park at Ill. Hwy. 53 and Int. Hwy. 55. Its developer filed for protection from creditors under federal bankruptcy laws in 1976.

The mall was closed in 1980 and boarded up in 1981 after a U.S. District Court ruling cleared title for sale to a new owner. IC Industries, which had been partly involved in the project as a lender, took it over from the bankrupt developer.

CHIC. TRIB. 6/19/84 SEC. 3, P. 8

Whew!

Bolingbrook Sun

9/19/84, P. 1

Vertical File

BB-OLD CHICAGO

Old Chicago sold!

by Kathy Gannon

Old Chicago now has a new owner and big plans for its future, but Monday's closing was nearly postponed due to a petition filed Friday by Bolingbrook developer Gurrie Rhoads.

Rhoads' "quo warranto" petition, which questioned the legality of the Village's incentive agreement with auto dealer Joseph Levy for a portion of the property, was dropped by Rhoads Monday morning just in time for the afternoon's closing proceedings.

Approximately 15 people were present at Monday's closing at the Ticor Title Co. office in Chicago, including attorneys for the parties involved and members of the Bolingbrook Local Development Corporation (BLDC).

Frank Rousseau, member of the BLDC, said Village officials and BLDC members are "very happy and excited" with the transaction. Because the closing is an "escrow closing," it may take several more days for the deal to be completed, Rousseau said.

Although C.L. Carr of Springfield, Mo., is now the owner of the Old Chicago property on Rt. 53 in Bolingbrook, sources have stated that certain details have yet to be ironed out between the Village and Levy.

At press time, it was not yet clear whether the Village is to purchase the parcel for the dealership from Carr or from IC Industries, before reselling to Levy. Two local officials gave conflicting re-

ports on the status of that sale.

Ordinances passed last week provided for the Village to purchase the property from Carr. New ordinances would have to be drawn up if the method of sale was changed.

The six-acre parcel on the Old Chicago tract, just south of Ed James Chevrolet, was to be purchased from Carr by the Village for \$800,000, and then sold to Levy for \$500,000.

The difference of \$300,000 was to be offered to Levy as an incentive to develop his Buick, Subaru and GMC truck dealership on the property.

An incentive of this nature is legal for the Old Chicago property, officials have stated, under state urban renewal statutes.

Until permanent financing is in place, the \$300,000 incentive is being taken from the Village's general fund.

The incentive will be paid back over five years from sales tax revenues generated by Levy's auto dealership, according to the ordinance passed last week by Village trustees.

It was the legality of this incentive which Rhoads challenged in his petition on Friday, nearly causing the closing to be called off.

According to his attorney, Tom Wilson of Joliet, Rhoads questioned whether or not the old Chicago property could legally be called an urban renewal project area.

Wilson went on to say that

Rhoads' primary objection to the Village's transaction with Levy involved an allegation of unfair competition.

"When Gurrie develops a portion of his property, he's required to pay for road improvements, water towers and other things. Gurrie is surcharged for these things, whereas on the other corner, there are subsidies offered to a developer. It just isn't fair competition," Wilson stated. "We saw little future in the development of the entire Rhoads/Dystrup property, not just Prairie Mountain."

Wilson conceded that earlier this year Levy was interested in locating his dealership on a portion of the Rhoads/Dystrup property, but Rhoads was not willing to negotiate for one of the parcels under discussion, despite pressure from the BLDC to do so.

Wilson stated that Rhoads had been willing to discuss other lots on the property but the negotiations had ended there.

According to Wilson, the fact that Levy is now receiving an incentive to develop on other property in the Village may have spurred Rhoads' action on Friday.

Negotiations over the weekend between Village attorney Barry Moss and Wilson resulted in an agreement for Rhoads to drop his petition.

"We have agreed, at least temporarily, to dismiss Friday's petition. We have (Please turn to Page 3, col. 1)

Old Chicago sold at last

(Continued from Page 1)

no ill feelings toward Mr. Levy," Wilson said. "Barry Moss and Bill Palmer have promised to meet with us in an attempt to resolve some of the problems."

Wilson did not preclude the possibility of other petitions being filed by Rhoads in the future concerning the issue of incentives, but stated that it would depend on the result of Rhoads' negotiations with the Village.

"I would say Gurrie's petition was from a business motive," Wilson said. "We just want to be able to compete on an even basis, and we will give our full cooperation to the Village."

Levy is expected to begin construction on his property sometime within the next three weeks, Rousseau said. He stated that the primary reason Levy decided to locate his dealership in Bolingbrook was the availability of the G.M. franchise in this area.

Rousseau stated that Carr is acting with several partners in developing the entire Old Chicago property.

"Carr's interests will now begin the process of revitalizing the whole area," Rousseau said. He added that Carr's plans include making the Old Chicago building "an operational, revenue-producing facility" for the Village.